

Implementation of copy cataloging procedures for serials at Library of Congress – a draft of an article prepared for LC Cataloging Newslines in December 2004 by Les Hawkins

Maureen Landry, head of the Library of Congress Serial Record Division (SRD) announced a new workflow for the copy cataloging of serials at LC in September 2004. According to the announcement sent to the CONSER email list <<http://www.loc.gov/acq/conser/new-docs/announceLCcopycat.pdf>>, cataloging technicians will perform all copy cataloging for Roman language serials. The technicians are working with unauthenticated as well as authenticated OCLC records. Formerly, the only records handled by technicians for copy cataloging were records that were already authenticated by another CONSER library.

The focus of SRD's new serials copy cataloging workflow is on providing sufficient access to, and identification of, the serial. Name and subject headings are verified and authorities are established if needed. Generally only obvious or egregious errors that impede access and identification are corrected. These records contain the authentication code lccopycat in the 042 field and have been authenticated as part of the CONSER database.

Serial records authenticated by CONSER institutions are reviewed for conformance to standards and the degree of authoritativeness they represent. Authenticated records are also made part of the CONSER database through the addition of an authentication code and a valid Library of Congress Card Number (LCCN). These elements cause the records to become part of the database distributed to subscribers through the Cataloging Distribution Service.

CONSER members expressed concern that SRD didn't involve other CONSER members in this decision that has an impact on the content of the shared CONSER database. It was unclear to members whether these records meet existing standards. Members were unsure of what elements to expect in the records, how problems found in copy would be handled, and the implementation timeframe.

The Program for Cooperative Cataloging Policy Committee (PoCo) and the PCC Steering Committee were informed about the controversy and discussed it at the annual PoCo meeting. Les Hawkins, CONSER Coordinator, worked with the PCC leadership to develop a plan to provide a means for CONSER members to make recommendations on the process.

A group of CONSER members is being organized to look at the records and procedures in terms of existing CONSER cataloging standards. They will make recommendations about the need for further standard development and record content.

Work will begin in January 2005 and the group will give recommendations or an update at CONSER Operations in May 2005. Cataloging managers at LC will consider the

recommendations of the group in advising PoCo on whether lccopycat records should continue to be added to the CONSER database. LC will, nevertheless, continue to use copy cataloging as one of its means to carry out its serials cataloging whether or not the records are added to the CONSER database.